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Agenda item 70

PREVENTION OF AN ARMS RACE IN OUTER SPACE

Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Macaire KABORE (Burkina Faso)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The item entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" was included in the provisional agenda of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly in accordance with its resolutions 45/55 B of 4 December 1990 and 47/51 of 9 December 1992.

2. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 24 September 1993, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the First Committee.

3. At its 2nd meeting, on 14 October 1993, the First Committee decided to hold a general debate on all disarmament and international security items allocated to it, namely, items 57 to 75 and 77 to 82. The deliberations on those items took place at the 3rd to 14th meetings, on 18 to 22, 25, 26 and 28 October (see A/C.1/48/SR.3-14). Consideration of draft resolutions on those items took place at the 18th to 23rd meetings, on 3 to 5, 8 and 9 November (see A/C.1/48/SR.18-23). Action on draft resolutions on those items took place at the 24th to 30th meetings, on 11, 12, 15, 16, 18 and 19 November (see A/C.1/48/SR.24-30).

4. In connection with item 70, the First Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Conference on Disarmament; 1/

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 27 (A/48/27).

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the study on the application of confidence-building measures in outer space (A/48/305 and Corr.1);

(c) Letter dated 12 July 1993 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General transmitting the documents adopted by the twenty-first Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (A/48/396-S/26440);

(d) Letter dated 31 August 1993 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/48/553).

II. CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS

A. Draft resolution A/C.1/48/L.5 and Rev.1

5. At the 23rd meeting, on 9 November, the representative of Sri Lanka, on behalf of Egypt, Sri Lanka and Venezuela, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" (A/C.1/48/L.5), which was later also sponsored by Algeria, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Myanmar, Nigeria, Panama, Romania, the Sudan, Ukraine and Viet Nam.

6. On 16 November, the sponsors submitted a revised draft resolution (A/C.1/48/L.5/Rev.1), which contained the following changes:

(a) In the tenth preambular paragraph, the words "have continued" were replaced by the words "were conducted";

(b) In operative paragraph 10, the words "to pursue intensively", were replaced by the words "to resume", and the words "in a constructive spirit" after the word "negotiations" were deleted.

7. At its 29th meeting, on 18 November, the Committee voted on draft resolution A/C.1/48/L.5/Rev.1 as follows:

(a) The eighteenth preambular paragraph was adopted by a recorded vote of 102 to none, with 32 abstentions. The voting was as follows: 2/

2/ Subsequently, the delegations of Djibouti and the Dominican Republic indicated that they had intended to vote in favour.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Belgium, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Micronesia (Federated States of), Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

(b) Operative paragraph 8 was adopted by a recorded vote of 110 to 1, with 22 abstentions. The voting was as follows: 2/

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovenia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former

Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Micronesia (Federated States of), Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

(c) Operative paragraph 10 was adopted by a recorded vote of 95 to none, with 35 abstentions. The voting was as follows: 2/

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Argentina, Armenia, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Micronesia (Federated States of), Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

(d) At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/48/L.5/Rev.1, as a whole, by a recorded vote of 136 to none, with 2 abstentions (see para. 10, draft resolution A). The voting was as follows: 2/

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Micronesia (Federated States of), United States of America.

B. Draft resolution A/C.1/48/L.12

8. At the 24th meeting, on 11 November, the representative of Argentina introduced a draft resolution entitled "Study on the application of confidence-building measures in outer space" (A/C.1/48/L.12), which was later also sponsored by Bolivia.

9. At its 24th meeting, on 11 November, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/48/L.12 without a vote (see para. 10, draft resolution B).

III. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

10. The First Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

Prevention of an arms race in outer space

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Prevention of an arms race in outer space

The General Assembly,

Recognizing the common interest of all mankind in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes,

Reaffirming the will of all States that the exploration and use of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, shall be for peaceful purposes, shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interest of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development, and shall be the province of all mankind,

Reaffirming also provisions of articles III and IV of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, 3/

Recalling the obligation of all States to observe the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations regarding the use or threat of use of force in their international relations, including in their space activities,

Reaffirming paragraph 80 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, 4/ in which it is stated that in order to prevent an arms race in outer space further measures should be taken and appropriate international negotiations held in accordance with the spirit of the Treaty,

Recalling its previous resolutions on this question and the Final Document adopted by the Tenth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Jakarta from 1 to 6 September 1992, 5/ and taking note of the proposals submitted to the General Assembly at its tenth special session and at its regular sessions, and of the recommendations made to the competent organs of the United Nations and to the Conference on Disarmament,

Recognizing the grave danger for international peace and security of an arms race in outer space and of developments contributing to it,

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3/ Resolution 2222 (XXI), annex.

4/ Resolution S-10/2.

5/ See A/47/675-S/24816, annex; see Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-seventh Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1992, document S/24816.

Emphasizing the paramount importance of strict compliance with existing arms limitation and disarmament agreements relevant to outer space, including bilateral agreements, and with the existing legal regime concerning the use of outer space,

Considering that wide participation in the legal regime applicable to outer space could contribute to enhancing its effectiveness,

Noting that bilateral negotiations, begun in 1985 between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America, were conducted with the declared objective of working out effective agreements aimed, inter alia, at preventing an arms race in outer space,

Welcoming the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space at the 1993 session of the Conference on Disarmament, in the exercise of the negotiating responsibilities of this sole multilateral body on disarmament, to continue to examine and identify, through substantive and general consideration, issues relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space,

Noting that the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, taking into account its previous efforts since its establishment in 1985 and seeking to enhance its functioning in qualitative terms, continued the examination and identification of various issues, existing agreements and existing proposals, as well as future initiatives relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, 6/ and that this contributed to a better understanding of a number of problems and to a clearer perception of the various positions,

Emphasizing the mutually complementary nature of bilateral and multilateral efforts in the field of preventing an arms race in outer space, and hoping that concrete results will emerge from those efforts as soon as possible,

Convinced that further measures should be examined in the search for effective and verifiable bilateral and multilateral agreements in order to prevent an arms race in outer space,

Stressing that the growing use of outer space increases the need for greater transparency and better information on the part of the international community,

Recalling in this context its previous resolutions, in particular resolutions 45/55 B of 4 December 1990 and 47/51 of 9 December 1992, in which, inter alia, it reaffirmed the importance of confidence-building measures as means conducive to ensuring the attainment of the objective of the prevention of an arms race in outer space,

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6/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 27 (A/47/27), para. 76.

Conscious of the benefits of confidence- and security-building measures in the military field,

Recognizing that there was wide agreement in the Ad Hoc Committee that the conclusion of an international agreement, or agreements, to prevent an arms race in outer space remained the fundamental task of the Committee and that the concrete proposals on confidence-building measures could form an integral part of the said agreements,

1. Reaffirms the importance and urgency of preventing an arms race in outer space and the readiness of all States to contribute to that common objective, in conformity with the provisions of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies;

2. Reaffirms its recognition, as stated in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, that the legal regime applicable to outer space by itself does not guarantee the prevention of an arms race in outer space, that this legal regime plays a significant role in the prevention of an arms race in that environment, that there is a need to consolidate and reinforce that regime and enhance its effectiveness, and that it is important strictly to comply with existing agreements, both bilateral and multilateral; 7/

3. Emphasizes the necessity of further measures with appropriate and effective provisions for verification to prevent an arms race in outer space;

4. Calls upon all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, to contribute actively to the objective of the peaceful use of outer space and of the prevention of an arms race in outer space and to refrain from actions contrary to that objective and to the relevant existing treaties in the interest of maintaining international peace and security and promoting international cooperation;

5. Reiterates that the Conference on Disarmament, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, has the primary role in the negotiation of a multilateral agreement or agreements, as appropriate, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects;

6. Requests the Conference on Disarmament to consider as a matter of priority the question of preventing an arms race in outer space;

7. Also requests the Conference on Disarmament to intensify its consideration of the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects, building upon areas of convergence and taking into account relevant proposals and initiatives, including those presented in the Ad Hoc Committee at the 1993 session of the Conference and at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly;

7/ Ibid., para. 76, para. 30 of the quoted text.

8. Further requests the Conference on Disarmament to re-establish an ad hoc committee with an adequate mandate at the beginning of its 1994 session and to continue building upon areas of convergence, taking into account the work undertaken since 1985, with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in outer space in all its aspects;

9. Recognizes, in this respect, the growing convergence of views on the elaboration of measures designed to strengthen transparency, confidence and security in the peaceful uses of outer space;

10. Urges the Russian Federation and the United States of America to resume their bilateral negotiations with a view to reaching early agreement for preventing an arms race in outer space, and to advise the Conference on Disarmament periodically of the progress of their bilateral sessions so as to facilitate its work;

11. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-ninth session the item entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".

B

Study on the application of confidence-building measures in outer space

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 45/55 B of 4 December 1990, in which it requested the Secretary-General to carry out, with the assistance of government experts, a study on the specific aspects related to the application of different confidence-building measures in outer space, including the different technologies available, and possibilities for defining appropriate mechanisms of international cooperation in specific areas of interest,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General; 8/

2. Requests the Secretary-General to arrange for the reproduction of the study as a United Nations publication and to give it the widest possible distribution;

3. Commends the study to the attention of all Member States.

8/ A/48/305 and Corr.1.